nical Cooperation at the Ministerial level. This was highly appreciated by Afghanistan as the 6th session of the Joint Commission had been held only at the level of the officials.

The seventh session of the Joint Commission at the Ministerial level was held in New Delhi in August, 1985. India agreed to the Afghan request for economic and technical assistance in the fields of Public Health, Industrial Development, etc. Follow up measures have already been initiated. During the Joint Commission meeting, the two sides also signed a Cultural Exchange Programme for 1985—87.

There have been regular discussions between India and Afghanistan on trade matters during 1984 and 1985. Recently, a Memorandum of Understanding on Trade has been signed. It is expected that Indian exports to Afghanistan will increase as a result of this.

Nepal : A number of visits have been exchanged between India and Nepal, keeping up a dialogue on matters of mutual interest. Thus, the Foreign Minister of Nepal visited India in July 1984, the Foreign Secretary visited Nepal in April, 1985 which was followed by the visit of Shri Shiv Shankar, MP to Nepal in July 1985 as Prime Minister's Special Envoy. The King of Nepal visited India in September, 1985 and held extensive discussions with the Prime Minister and other Union Ministers. Secretary (ER) also subsequently visited Nepal in November, 1985 in connection with the construction of the western end of the East-West Highways.

A number of steps were taken in the field of economic cooperation and assistance. A panel of names for consultants for the Karnali Hydel Project was jointly proposed by India and Nepal to the World Bank for approval in 1985. The Transit Treaty giving Nepal the right of transit for imports and exports through India was extended from March, 1985 to December, 1985. The Devighat 14-MW Hydel Project built with Indian assistance of Rs. 42.818 crores was inaugurated in March by the King of Nepal. An agreement for renovation and extension of Chandra Canal at a cost of Rs. 19 crores was reached in October, 1984. India took up the expansion of OPD of Bir Hospital, Kathmandu in June 1984. In August, 1985 Agreements were concluded with Nepal to electrify 76 villages in Nepal at a cost of Rs. 4 crores. A Museum Library-cum-Documentation Centre will be set up at the Institute of Forestry in Hitauda at a cost of Rs. 2.6 crores.

In September, 1985 an agreement was concluded with Nepal for provision of Rs. 50 crores to assist Nepal to build the 200 KM section at the Western End of the East-West Highway.

Visits of Indian and Pakistan Delegations to others Country

1932. SHRI RAMSINGBHAI PATALIYABHAI RATHVAKOLI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be peased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that a number of official delegations and Ministers from India and Pakistan visited others' country during the 1st January, 1985 to 15th November, 1985 and held discussions on many bilateral issues ;

(b) if so, the names and the status of such delegations and Minister ;

(c) the details of discussions held and the assurances given by each other ; and

(d) the outcome thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI B. R. BHAGAT) : (a) to (d) A number of official and Ministerial-level visits have been exchanged between India and Pakistan during 1985. The details of these are as follows :—

(1) A 6-Member Pak Railway delegation led by Director Wagon Control, Pakistan Railways paid a visit to New Delhi from 7 to 10 January, 1985 under the Indo-Pak Joint Commission for holding talks with their Indian counterpart on settlement of Railway accounts and improvement of railway facilities.

(2) A 5-member Indian delegation led by Shri C.S. Kukmani Commissioner for Indus Waters visited Pakistan from 9 to 13 January 1985, to attend the 60th meeting of the Indus Commission.

(3) Shri Romesh Bhandari, Foreign Secretary and Shri S.K. Lambah, Jonit Secretary (AP) in the Ministry of External Affairs, visited Pakistan from 4 to 6 April. Several matters relating to bilateral relations were discussed during this visit.

(4) Pakistan's Foreign Minister, Sahabzada Yaqub Khan visited New Delhi to attend the NAM Coordination Bureau meeting from 17 to 22 April. Bilateral relations were reviewed during this meeting.

(5) Pakistan's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Mr. Zain Noorani made a brief stopover in India on his return from Thimpu after 14 May.

(6) Pakistan's Foreign Minister, Sahabzada Yaqub Khan led Pakistan's delegation to the second meeting of the Indo-Pak Joint Commission held on 2—4 July. Several important decisions were taken at the meeting, such as signing of the agreement on cooperation in agricultural research, agreeing on the text of the draft cultural cooperation agreement, commencement of through railway booking facilities between designated railway stations in the two countries from Oct. 1985, waiver of requirement of police reporting in respect of bona-fide businessmen and holders of transit visa, etc.

(7) Pakistan's Foreign Secretary, Mr. Niaz Naik, visited India from July 29—August 1. During meetings, there was a candid review of various aspects of Indo-Pakistan relations. The two Foreign Secretaries availed of the opportunity to further exchange views on India's proposal for a treaty on peace, friendship cooperation and Pakistan's proposal for a non-aggression pact.

(8) A 4-member delegation led by Shri M. B. Lal, Chairman Cotton Corporation of India, paid a 3-day visit to Pakistan from 4 August to hold talks with their Pakistani counterparts on the sale of cotton to India

(9) A Pakistani Civil Aviation delegation led by Air Marshal Khurshid Anwar Mirza, Director General of Civil Aviation of Pakistan visited India from 22 to 23 August. Various problems relating to civil aviation matters were discussed.

(10) A 5-member Indian Telecommunications delegation led by Shri Shabir Ahmed, Director, Coaxial Cable Project, New Delhi, paid a visit to Pakistan from 16 to 18 September to carry out joint inspection and testing of Attari-Lahore Telecommunication Link.

(11) India's Communication Secretary, Mr. Thomas Kora, visited Pakistan from 21 to 25 September and discussed avenues to further cooperation in the field of telecommunications. The highlight of the visit was that a high capacity

coaxial cable system carrying 1200 channels and a TV channel was inaugurated on Sept. 25.

(12) A Pakistan Health delegation led by Lt. Gen. Mohyuddin, Chairman of Pakistan Medical Research Council visited India under the Joint Commission framework from 15 to 18 October. During the talks, possible areas of cooperation for future collaboration were dilineated including exchange of information in medical education, research, training etc. collaboration in communicable diseases control; research, collaboration and exchange of information in the field of family planning and welfare, etc.

(13) Dr. Mahbubul Haq, Pakistan's Minister for Finance, Planning and Economic Coordination paid a two day visit to India from 14 to 16 November. He was accompanied by the Secretary General; Economic Affairs Mr. Ejaz Naik, Commerce Secretary Mr. Mukhtar Masood and Additional Secretary (Planning) Dr. M.S. Jilani.

Withdrawal of relaxation of educational Qualifications for SC/ST

1933. SHRI RAM NARESH KUSHAWAHA : will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have recently withdrawn the relaxation of educational qualification and educational standards in the case of SC/ST candidates in the recruitment rules ; and

(b) if so, what are the reasons for withdrawing the relaxation and what is its likely impact on the career prospects of SC/ST candidates ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL AND ADMINISTERATIVE REFORMS AND PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) No, Sir, Where a minimum educational qualification is prescribed in the Recruitment Rules, there are at present no Government instructions enabling relaxation of the minimum educational qualification in the case of SC/ST candidates. As a corollary, wherever a minimum standard is prescribed as part of the minimum educational qualification, it would apply uniformly and there is no provision for relaxing the prescribed minimum standard in the case of SC/ST candidates.

(b) Since no relaxation has been withdrawn, there will be no impact on the career prospects of SC/ST candidates.

चीनी मिलों के कारण प्रदूषण

1934. **श्री रामचन्द्र विकल :** क्या प्रधान मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) देश में उन चीनी मिलों की संख्या कितनी है जो कि ऐसे नुकसानदेह अवशिष्ट पदार्थ छोड़ती है जिससे मिल के इर्द गिर्द के क्षेत्रों में प्रदूषण फैलता है ;

(ख) सरकार ने इस प्रदूषण पर नियंत्रण के लिए क्या कदम उठाए हैं ;

(ग) क्या कुछ चीनी मिलों को प्रदूषण निवारण बोर्डके आदेशों/अनुदेशों का उल्लघंन करने का दोषी पाया गया है; और

(घ) यदि हा, तो उनके नाम क्या हैं और उनके विरुद्ध क्या कार्यवाही की गई है ?

पर्यावरण और वन मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री (श्री जैड० आर० अन्सारी) : (क) बड़े तथा मझोले क्षेत्र में चीनी की 274 मिलें है, जिनमें से 118 इकाइयों ने